

and mentioned, as some of the more interesting birds he had noticed there, the Snow-Bunting, the Purple Sandpiper, the Ivory Gull, and Buffon's Skua. An example of the Spitsbergen Ptarmigan (*Lagopus hemileucurus*) had been shot by one of the party while they were in Ice Fiord, but the bird was stated to be rare there.

The Rev. H. A. MACPHERSON exhibited two interesting hybrids of *Lagopus scoticus* and *Tetrao tetrix*.

Colonel L'ESTRANGE drew attention to some of the points relating to the law as it affected bird-catching.

#### X.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

1. *Annals of Scottish Natural History*, Nos. 19 & 20, July and October, 1896.

In No. 19 Mr. Lionel W. Hinxman reports on "the Migration and Occurrences of Birds in Scotland during 1895," and expresses his regret at the falling off in the number of schedules sent in for that year—only 20 having been received as compared with 36 for 1894. From Barra three species not hitherto identified in the Outer Hebrides are now recorded. Mr. William Evans, as well as Mr. T. E. Buckley, add to our previous knowledge of the breeding-range of the Tufted Duck (*Fuligula cristata*) in Scotland, and both these authorities likewise show that the Pochard (*F. ferina*) has nested in Fife, and even in Hoy, Orkney; while the Rev. H. A. Macpherson discourses of *Harelda glacialis* in the Solway Firth. In No. 20 Mr. R. Godfrey has an interesting paper on the birds observed last summer in Shetland, wherein he shows that the Great Skua is extending its breeding-area, and the same may be said of the Fulmar. Mr. W. Evans has identified the Roseate Tern and an *adult* example of Sabine's Gull in the Firth of Forth; a Roller was obtained in Orkney in June; and Mr. T. E. Buckley reports a Greenland Falcon from Skye on the 26th of May.

## 2. 'The Auk,' July and October, 1896.

The July number opens with a paper by Mr. H. K. Job on the Ducks of Plymouth co., Massachusetts; Mr. Walter Faxon gives details of the more interesting of the 200 drawings of the birds of Georgia made by John Abbot between 1790 and 1810; Mr. O. Widmann remarks upon the Peninsula of Missouri as a winter home for birds; Mr. A. W. Anthony indicates the points wherein his experience differs from that of Mr. Leverett M. Loomis respecting *Puffinus opisthomelas*; Mr. A. H. Norton records his observations on the Harlequin Duck in Maine; Mr. Ruthven Deane contributes some notes on the Passenger Pigeon in confinement; and Mr. D. W. Prentiss gives an account of some birds met with in Bermuda. The coloured frontispiece represents *Lagopus evermanni*, sp. n., from Alaska, described by Prof. D. G. Elliot in the January number, and named after Prof. B. W. Evermann (*cf.* Ibis, 1896, p. 410).

In the October 'Auk' the coloured plate is intended to show the differences between two of the geographical races of *Ammodramus caudacutus*, and illustrates a paper by Mr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr. Mr. R. F. Young and Mr. W. T. Bailey severally write on Pennsylvanian birds; Mr. Sylvester D. Judd discourses on the feeding-habits of the English Sparrow and the American Crow, accentuating the iniquities of the former species; Mr. H. C. Oberholser critically examines the Mexican forms of the genus *Certhia*; Mr. Abbott H. Thayer makes "Further Remarks on the Law which underlies Protective Coloration"; and Dr. A. P. Chadbourne contributes a first instalment on "Evidence suggestive of the Occurrence of 'Individual Dichromatism' in *Megascops asio*." There are also two papers which will interest ornithologists on this side, namely, "Summer Birds of the Rhine," by Mr. Ralph Hoffmann, and "The Cormorant-rookeries of the Lofoten Islands," by Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, with a plate after a photograph taken by Prof. Collett. It is pleasant to find our American cousins taking notice of Palearctic birds.

### 3. Berg's Oological Notices.

[Comunicaciones Oologicas por el Dr. Carlos Berg, Director del Museo Nacional de Buenos Aires. An. Mus. Nac. Buenos Aires, v. p. 33.]

Dr. Berg casts scorn upon the supposed new diminutive *Rhea* (*R. nana*) which Mr. Lydekker has lately established on an egg in the La Plata Museum obtained in Patagonia (cf. Rev. Mus. La Plata, vi. p. 103 (1895); Ibis, 1895, p. 171), and is of opinion that the egg in question is only a "cock's-egg" of *R. darwini*. He has seen similar eggs of *R. americana*. Dr. Berg also describes the egg of *Crax sclateri* (which, misled by the author of the 22nd volume of the B. M. Catalogue, he calls *C. fasciolata*) and an abnormal clutch of eggs of *Vanellus cayennensis*.

### 4. Bladen on the Cuckoo and its Foster-Parents.

[The Cuckoo and its Foster-Parents.—Being a Portion of the Annual Address delivered to the Members of the North Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club and Archæological Society. By W. Wells Bladen, President. Reprinted from the Trans. North Stafford. Nat. Field Club, March 1896.]

Mr. Bladen's address contains an account of the principal facts hitherto ascertained as to the breeding-habits of the Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), and concludes with a complete list of the 145 species of birds in the nests of which it has been known to deposit its eggs.

### 5. Büttikofer on a probably new Tinamou.

[On a probably new Species of *Crypturus*. By Dr. J. Büttikofer. Notes Leyd. Mus. xviii.]

This supposed new species is based on a specimen lately living in the Zoological Garden of Amsterdam, and stated to have been received from Argentina. It is very closely allied to *C. tataupa* and *C. parvirostris*.

### 6. Büttikofer on the Genus *Pycnonotus* and its Allies.

[On the Genus *Pycnonotus* and some allied Genera, with Enumeration of the Specimens in the Leyden Museum. By J. Büttikofer. Notes Leyd. Mus. xvii. note 32.]

Dr. Büttikofer gives us a revision of the species of *Pycnonotus* and of 20 of the allied genera based upon the specimens

in the Leyden Museum, and embracing altogether some 60 species. Of these genera, five are now newly proposed, namely :—*Centrolophus* (type *Brachypus leucogenys*, Gray), *Pachycephalixus* (type *Pycnonotus sinensis*), *Stictognathus* (type *Pycnonotus taiwanus*, Styan), *Gymnocrotaphus* (type *Brachypus tygus*, probably a misprint for *typus*, Bp.), and *Mesolophus* (type *Otocompsa flaviventris*).

### 7. Cherrie on Birds from San Domingo.

[Contribution to the Ornithology of San Domingo. By George K. Cherrie. Field Columbian Museum Publication 10. Ornithological Series. Vol. i. no. 1, 1896.]

After a preliminary account of his routes and adventures in San Domingo, where he landed at Santo Domingo city on January 8th, 1895, Mr. Cherrie, who was sent on a collecting excursion by the authorities of the Field Columbian Museum of Chicago, gives us a list of the birds of which he obtained specimens, and adds valuable field-notes on each species. Mr. Cory and his collectors having made almost a clean sweep of the island so far as birds are concerned, only two new species (*Elainea cherriei* and *Ilyetornis fieldi*, previously characterized by Mr. Cory) were discovered; but Mr. Cherrie obtained good series of specimens of such little-known birds as *Microliyea palustris*, *Euphonia musica*, *Phœnicophilus palmarum* (the most abundant bird in San Domingo!), *Loxomitris dominicensis*, and *Nesocittes micromegas*, besides a single example of *Pitangus gabbi* and three of *Calyptophilus frugivorus*.

We regret to observe that Mr. F. J. V. Skiff, in a notice of the publications of this new Museum, attached to this paper, uses the horrible word “*scientist*” instead of “*scient*,” which is an exact equivalent and a correctly formed term.

### 8. Crossman on the Birds of Hertfordshire.

[Notes on Birds observed in Hertfordshire during the year 1895. By Alan F. Crossman, F.L.S. Trans. Hertf. N. H. Soc. ix. p. 73.]

Mr. Crossman's report on the birds of Hertfordshire for 1895 adds three species to the county list. These are the

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*), the Two-barred Crossbill (*Loxia bifasciata*), and Baillon's Crake (*Porzana bailloni*). Two of these did not actually occur in 1895, but have not been previously recorded. Mr. Crossman also points out that the Great Bustard (not hitherto generally included in the Hertfordshire list) is said to have been formerly found on Royston Heath. It is stated that there are 40 or 50 pairs of the Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) on the Tring reservoirs in summer.

#### 9. Finn on two rare Indian Ducks.

[On the Occurrence in India of two rare Ducks—*Fuligula baeri* and *Erismatura leucocephala*. By F. Finn. Proc. A. S. B., April 1896.]

Eleven specimens of Baer's Duck were procured by Mr. Finn in the Calcutta Bazaar in February last\*. The occurrence of this N.E. Asiatic species in India had not been previously established. It is a near ally of *Fuligula nyroca*. The example of *Erismatura leucocephala* was shot in Central India near Lucknow. The British Museum contains several examples from the same district and others from the North-west Provinces.

#### 10. Hartert on a new Swift from Madagascar.

[A new Form of Swift from Madagascar. By Ernst Hartert. Novitates Zool. iii. p. 231 (1896).]

*Micropus willsi*, as Mr. Hartert proposes to call this species, is apparently a small form of "*M. melba africanus*," based upon a single specimen obtained by the Rev. J. Wills near East Imerina, in Eastern Madagascar, in February 1896, and sent to the Tring Museum.

#### 11. Hartert on Everett's Collections in Celebes and the adjacent Islets.

[On Ornithological Collections made by Mr. Alfred Everett in Celebes and on the Islands south of it. By Ernst Hartert. Novitates Zool. iii. p. 148 (1896).]

Mr. Alfred Everett arrived at Macassar in September

\* Three of these were sent alive by Mr. Finn to the Zoological Society. See P. Z. S. 1896, p. 780.

1895, and determined to explore Bonthain Peak, an enormous mountain of nearly 10,000 feet elevation in the southern peninsula of Celebes. During his stay there he met the two Messrs. Sarasin similarly employed, and their specimens, having reached Europe first, have been already described by Messrs. Meyer and Wiglesworth (see *Ibis*, 1895, p. 397). Nevertheless Mr. Everett was still able to add new species to the list. Mr. Hartert refers Mr. Everett's specimens to 103 species, of which the following are described as new:—*Cinnyris frenata dissentiens*, *Oriolus celebensis meridionalis* (ex MS. Meyer et Wiglesw.), *Siphia bonthaina*, and *Spilospizias trinotatus hesitandus*. Specimens were also procured of the rare Crow *Gazzola typica*, and two males of *Surniculus muschenbroeki*—a Cuckoo of which only one female (procured in Batchian by Dr. A. B. Meyer's hunters) was previously known (*cf.* Cat. Birds, xix. p. 230).

On leaving Celebes Mr. Everett sent his men to Saleyer, and afterwards went there himself, and also to the adjoining islands of Kalao and Djampea, between Flores and Celebes. Saleyer had been previously visited by Prof. Max. Weber in 1888–89, and examples of 14 species were obtained there (see *Ibis*, 1894, p. 435). But Mr. Everett has now increased the list to 40 species, and has collected specimens of 41 species in Djampea and 24 in Kalao.

Mr. Everett's series from these three islands represent altogether 73 species, of which *Pachycephalus everetti*, *Edoliosoma emancipata* (lege *emancipatum*!), *Siphia djampeana*, *Monarcha everetti*, *Pitta virginialis*, and *Osmotreron wallucci pallidior* are now described as new from Djampea, and *Siphia kalaoensis* from Kalao. "From the present material it would appear that both Djampea and Kalao have as much, or rather more, in common with the Lesser Sunda Islands and Timor as with Celebes. But a few forms are peculiar.

"The ornis of Saleyer is evidently that of South Celebes in general."

12. *Le Souëf's Trip to Mallacoota.*

[A Trip to Mallacoota. By D. Le Souëf. Vict. Nat. xiii. p. 18 (1896).]

A very interesting account of his trip on a bicycle from Melbourne to Mallacoota was read by Mr. Dudley Le Souëf before the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria in January last, and is now printed in the 'Victorian Naturalist.' Field-notes on birds occupy most of the discourse of this enthusiastic observer. On the Gippsland lakes Ducks, Swans, and Gallinules were seen in many thousands, and "they could only be described by acres of them." At Mallacoota Lyre-birds were numerous in the gullies, and a long list of other species found breeding is given.

13. *Loomis on Californian Water-birds.*

[California Water-birds. No. III. South Farallon Island in July. By Leverett M. Loomis. Extr. fr. Proc. Cal. Acad. Sci. ser. 2, vol. vi.]

In the third of his series of papers on the water-birds of the Californian coast, Mr. Loomis gives an account of the feathered inhabitants of the Farallones Islands off San Francisco, which he visited in July last. Here the sea-birds' eggs are collected for sale in San Francisco to the amount (in 1896) of 7645 dozens—chiefly those of *Uria troile californica*. Mr. Loomis gives a list, accompanied by good field-notes, of the ten indigenous birds and four stragglers noted. Besides the Murres, the Tufted Puffin (*Lunda cirrhata*), Cassin's Auklet (*Ptychorhamphus aleuticus*), and the Pigeon-Guillemot (*Cephus columba*) are abundant, and two Petrels were found nesting—*Oceanodroma leucorhoa* and *O. homochroa*.

14. *Lucas and Ridgway on the Procnatiidæ.*

[Osteological and Pterylographical Characters of the Procnatidæ. By F. A. Lucas. Proc. U. S. N. Mus. xviii. p. 505.—Characters of a new American Family of Passerine Birds. By Robert Ridgway. Proc. U. S. N. Mus. xviii. p. 449.]

Mr. F. A. Lucas first pointed out the notable characters of the skull of *Procnias*, which has hitherto been usually

regarded by modern writers as an aberrant member of the Tanagridæ, in a communication made to 'The Auk' in April 1895 (p. 186). Mr. Ridgway thereupon proposes to elevate this type to the rank of an independent family of Oscines, and now gives us his diagnosis of it. Mr. Lucas adds a paper in which the osteological and pterylographical characters of the Procnatiidæ are set forth. The striking features of the skull of *Procnias* consist in "the total absence of the transpalatine processes, the small size of the interpalatines, and the outward curvature of the prepalatine bars." It is not, however, suggested that the systematic position of this form should be materially altered, as it still seems to be quite as nearly allied to the Tanagridæ as to any other family of Passeres.

#### 15. *Mivart's 'Monograph of the Lories.'*

[A Monograph of the Lories, or Brush-tongued Parrots, composing the Family Loriidæ. By St. George Mivart, F.R.S. Pp. i-liii, 1-193. Folio. London: R. H. Porter, 1896.]

The issue of Dr. Mivart's beautifully illustrated Monograph of the Lories must be considered as one of the leading ornithological events of the past year, and would have been noticed in our last number had not time failed us for its detailed examination. Now that we have been able to study it carefully, we have come to the conclusion that the present volume forms no unworthy addition to the splendid series of pictured memoirs upon select groups of birds which the brethren of the British Ornithologists' Union have published during the past twenty years. In some points Dr. Mivart's monograph is almost unique among its fellows, every one of the known species being figured on 61 plates drawn by Keulemans, and 22 of the figures being taken from the typical specimens, whilst 16 of the species are now represented for the first time.

In his arrangement of the Lories and in the general treatment of the genera and species, Dr. Mivart has wisely determined to follow Count Salvadori's well-known work which constitutes the twentieth volume of the British



Museum Catalogue. Here, as he remarks in his preface, that accomplished ornithologist "has furnished ready to hand a careful classification, excellent though short descriptions, exact statements as to geographical distribution, and an exhaustive bibliography." Thus Dr. Mivart's chief work has been the testing of Count Salvadori's statements, and the addition to them of such further information as his many friends and correspondents in this country and on the Continent have been able to supply to him. The anatomical chapter given in the introduction is, however, quite original, as is the exhaustive account of the geographical distribution of the Lories, which is excellently illustrated by special maps, and presents many features of great interest.

It might be supposed that the completion of the present work would leave little more to be done on the subject of the Lories. But such is the inexhaustible fertility of Nature that those who turn over Dr. Mivart's pages will observe that numerous points are specified as open for further study. Of some well-marked species the exact habitats are still unknown, others are founded on unique specimens and require confirmation by additional evidence. In some cases, again, what are apparently species may turn out hereafter to be mere varieties. Even in such a favourite and much-studied group as the Lories, therefore, there is a large field left open for future investigators.

#### 16. *Nathusius on the Oology of the Rheas.*

[Zur Oologie der Rhea-Arten. Von W. v. Nathusius, J. f. O. 1896, p. 257.]

Herr W. v. Nathusius has added another contribution to his valuable series of essays on the structure of the egg-shell in birds by the present article on the Oology of the Rheas. It is, however, unfortunate that he had not at his disposal a better authenticated set of specimens to base his studies upon, most of them having been obtained through dealers without any positive evidence of their origins and localities. The *Rhea americana* is now so common in Zoological Gardens that it could not be difficult to obtain authentic specimens

of its eggs. Of *R. macrorhyncha*, Herr v. Nathusius does not seem to have examined any examples.

The conclusion arrived at by the author, after full discussion of the various specimens, is that eggs of *R. darwini* are at once distinguishable from those of *R. americana* (Argentine examples being taken as typical of this form) by the considerably larger diameter of the mamillæ.

Herr v. Nathusius is of opinion that, judging from the difference in the diameter of the mamillæ, the Rhea of Paraguay may be specifically distinct from that of Buenos Ayres.

As regards the occurrence of *Rhea darwini* in Northern Chili, Herr v. Nathusius has omitted to notice that this extension of its range has been already ascertained and more than once commented upon by Selater\*.

#### 17. Oberholser on two new American Woodpeckers.

[Descriptions of two new Subspecies of the Downy Woodpecker, *Dryobates pubescens*. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xviii. p. 547.]

Mr. Oberholser proposes to separate from the Downy Woodpecker of North America two geographical subspecies—*Dryobates pubescens meridionalis* (Sw.), from the Gulf States, and *D. p. nelsoni*, from Alaska and Northern China.

#### 18. Reed's Catalogue of Chilean Birds.

[Catálogo de las Aves Chilenas, por Edwyn C. Reed. Santiago, 1896. (Publicado en los 'Anales de la Universidad,' tomo xciii.)]

We are glad to see that Mr. Reed has returned to the study of his country's birds. His list is far superior to anything else that has appeared in Chili on this subject. Mr. Reed has judiciously followed as nearly as may be James's 'New List of Chilean Birds' of 1892, which was carefully corrected and revised by Selater before publication. He has added much to the value of his list by the short notes on distribution and occurrence attached to each species.

\* See P. Z. S. 1890, p. 412, and 1891, p. 137.

Mr. Reed increases the list of the birds of Chili to 278, that is 23 more than James, as he enlarges the area of Chili down to the Magellan Straits, to which it nominally extends.

There are a good many unnecessary misprints in the scientific names of the list, and we can assure Mr. Reed that *Henicornis phœnicura* of Patagonia is quite a distinct species from *H. melanura* of Chili (*cf.* Cat. B. xvi. p. 26), as he would at once allow if he had ever seen specimens of it.

### 19. Reichenow on Papuan and Australian Birds.

[Zoologische Forschungsreisen in Australien und dem Malayischen Archipel. Mit Unterstützung des Herrn Dr. Paul von Ritter ausgeführt in den Jahren 1891-93 von Dr. Richard Semon. Liste der Vögel. Bestimmt von Dr. A. Reichenow. Folio. Jena, 1894.]

The first number of the fifth volume of Dr. Semon's great work on the results of his journey in Australia and the Malay Archipelago contains a list, compiled by Dr. Reichenow, of about 50 species of birds of which Dr. Semon obtained specimens. There appears to be nothing specially remarkable amongst them.

### 20. Richmond on Birds from Kashmir, Baltistan, and Ladak.

[Catalogue of a Collection of Birds made in Kashmir, Baltistan, and Ladak, with Notes on some of the Species and a Description of a new Species of *Cyanocula*. By Charles W. Richmond. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xviii. p. 451.]

Dr. W. L. Abbott, of Philadelphia, well known to naturalists for his explorations in East Africa, the Seychelles, and the adjoining islands, spent part of the years from 1891 to 1894 in travel in Cashmir and the neighbouring districts of Northern India. Hence he sent home to the U.S. National Museum 746 well-prepared specimens of birds, which are now catalogued by Mr. Richmond and referred to 188 species. Mr. Richmond has for convenience used the sequence of families and genera employed by Dr. Sharpe in his account of the birds of the second Yarkand Mission, but has varied the nomenclature in places by introducing some

of the results of Dr. Stejneger's "inconvenient discoveries," in which we trust that no one will follow him.

The birds of all this district have been collected in mass by Mr. Hume and his assistants, and by many other Indian ornithologists. Mr. Richmond nevertheless ventures to describe a new Blue-throat, *Cyanecula abbotti*, from the Nubra Valley, Ladak, where *C. suecica* was also obtained. It is admitted to be "very closely related to the White-spotted Blue-throat, *Cyanecula wolffi*," but is stated to differ "in the deeper blue of the throat, the blue lores, and the longer bill." It is, probably, the *Cyanecula wolffi* of Hume, Biddulph, and others, from the same countries.

21. *Ridgway on Birds from the Seychelles and adjoining Islands.*

[On Birds collected by Dr. W. L. Abbott in the Seychelles, Amirantes, Gloriosa, Assumption, Aldabra, and adjacent Islands, with Notes on Habits, &c., by the Collector. By Robert Ridgway. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xviii. p. 509.]

We have now a complete report upon the specimens of birds collected by Dr. W. L. Abbott, of Philadelphia, on the Seychelles and other islands of the Indian Ocean and transmitted to the National Museum at Washington. Mr. Ridgway has already published characters of the principal novelties (see *Ibis*, 1894, p. 314; 1895, p. 292).

The specimens were 264 in number, and represent, as Dr. Abbott believes, almost all the species found in the islands visited. "No land-birds exist, unless introduced, on any of the Amirantes or other islands between the Seychelles and Cosmoledo and Aldabra." In Aldabra 14 land-birds were found resident, and 6 others (accidental visitors) were obtained.

In the list of Seychelles birds, 27 species are included. Amongst these was one example of *Palaornis wardi* from Mahé, where it is "on the verge of extinction," but it is said to be still common on Silhouette. A provisional name (*Turtur abbotti*) is given to the local form of *T. picturatus*. On the Amirante group examples of 24 species were met

with. Amongst these was *Turtur saturatus*, restricted to this locality. Twelve species were found on Assumption Island, amongst which was a new Rail (*Dryolimnas abbotti*), a new Booby (*Sula abbotti*), and a new Sun-bird (*Nectarinia abbotti*). On Gloriosa Island examples of 22 species were obtained or observed, of which 4 were Passeres, and *Ixocincla madagascariensis rostrata* is a doubtfully new subspecies. Of Aldabran birds no fewer than 45 are enumerated, of which 10 are Passeres. The European Sand-Martin (*Cotyle riparia*) was found on Gloriosa and Aldabra. A very useful table of distribution of the 212 species recognized as occurring in the various islands is given at the end of the article. It is a pity that a map, showing the exact positions of the island-groups and their distances from each other, is not appended.

## 22. *Salvadori on a new Rhamphocælus.*

[Descrizione di una nuova specie del genere *Rhamphocælus* di Chiriqui. Boll. Mus. Zool. Torino, xi. no. 249 (July 1896).]

*Rhamphocælus festæ* is a new species allied to *R. passerinii*, but distinguishable by its smaller size and red breast-band. The type-specimen was obtained by Dr. Festa during a recent traverse of the isthmus of Darien, and was presented by him, along with other specimens, to the Zoological Museum of Turin.

## 23. *Semon's 'Im Australischen Busch.'*

[Im Australischen Busch und an der Küsten des Korallenmeeres. Reiserlebnisse und Beobachtungen eines Naturforschers in Australien, Neu-Guinea und den Molukken, von Richard Semon, Professor in Jena. Leipzig: Engelmann, 1896.]

This is one of the best books of travel and natural history that we have read for a long time, and may be compared favourably even with those of such past-masters in this department as Wallace and Bates. Prof. Semon went out to Australia to study the development of Monotremes, Marsupials, and *Ceratodus*, in which he appears to have attained undoubted success. On his journey home he visited the

south end of New Guinea, the Moluccas, Celebes, and Java, and seems to have kept his well-trained powers of observation hard at work at these places also. Prof. Semon apparently paid special attention to the Mammal-class, but goes into nearly every branch of zoology, botany, geology, and anthropology, not to mention politics. There are numerous references to birds throughout the volume. We may especially call the attention of our readers to the narrative of Prof. Semon's excursion up the Gara River from Milne Bay, where he met with Lories, Paradise-birds, Black Cockatoos, Goura-Pigeons, and other rarities of the rich avifauna of New Guinea.

#### 24. *Sharpe on the Limicolæ.*

[Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum. Volume XXIV. Catalogue of the Limicolæ in the Collection of the British Museum. By R. Bowdler Sharpe. London, 1896.]

The twenty-fourth volume of the great Catalogue of Birds is devoted to the Limicolæ. It contains an account of 255 species of this group, which are represented in the National Collection by no less than 13,440 specimens, "exclusive of many hundreds of duplicates." Only five of the recorded species have no representatives in the British Museum.

Dr. Sharpe divides the Limicolæ into six families—Ædicnemidæ, Cursoriidæ, Parridæ, Charadriidæ, Chionididæ, and Thinocorythidæ.

The Ædicnemidæ are divided into 4 genera, which contain altogether 11 species.

The Cursoriidæ are arranged in 8 genera, containing 25 species. Besides the Coursers, the aberrant forms of *Dromas* and *Ortyxælus* are placed in this family. We agree, however, with Dr. Sharpe's remark that *Dromas* should probably stand alone.

The third family, "Parridæ," contains, as here arranged, 7 genera and 11 species. We may remark that, as Dr. Sharpe (following Dr. Stejneger) discards the Linnean term *Parra* for the Jacanas altogether, he is not at liberty to use it for the name of the family.

In the fourth family, Charadriidæ, will be found assembled the great mass of the Limicolæ, as it embraces all the forms usually referred to the Scolopacidæ as well as the Plovers. It is divided into ten subfamilies, and contains altogether 79 genera and 190 species. The characters employed in the diagnoses of these subfamilies are mostly taken from the toes and the scaling of the tarsi. A new genus (*Peltohyas*) and a new subfamily (*Peltohyatinæ*) are formed for Gould's *Eudromias australis*, apparently because of the different scaling of the tarsus.

The Sheath-bills, Chionididæ, constitute Dr. Sharpe's fifth family of Limicolæ. He recognizes 2 genera and 3 species of these abnormal Sea-Plovers.

Finally, the Thinocorythidæ, with 2 genera and 5 species, close the list of Limicolæ. If the name of the family be thus orthographically emended, the generic name *Thinocorus* should be written "*Thinocorys*" (*θις*, *littus*, and *κόρυς*, *alanda*).

The following new generic terms are proposed in the present volume :—

*Hydrophasis* (p. 69), emended from *Hydrophasianus*.

*Phyllopezus* (p. 76), type *Parra africana*.

*Asarcia* (p. 85), type *P. variabilis*, Linn. (i. e. *P. gymnostoma*, Wagl.).

*Microsarcops* (p. 133), type *Pluvianus cinerea*, Blyth.

*Zonifer* (p. 154), type *Charadrius tricolor*, Vieill.

*Anomalophrys* (p. 156), type *Lobivanellus superciliosus*, Reichenb.

*Eurypterus* (p. 171), altered to *Euhyas*, p. 736, type *Charadrius leucurus*, Licht.

*Peltohyas* (p. 307), type *Eudromias australis*, Gould.

*Mesoscolopax* (p. 371), type *Numenius minutus*, Gould.

So far as we can see, only one new species is characterized for the first time. This is *Hæmatopus durnfordi* (p. 118) from Patagonia.

Excellent coloured figures, drawn by Keulemans, of the following species are given :—*Rhinoptilus bisignatus*, R.

*hartingi*, *R. cinctus*, *R. seebohmi*, *R. chalcopterus*, *R. albofasciatus*; *Galactochrysea liberiaë*, *G. emini*; *Hæmatopus durnfordi*; *Defilippia crassirostris* and *D. leucoptera*.

Ornithologists should be, and are, most thankful to Dr. Sharpe for the care he has bestowed upon this volume, in which the compilation of the multitude of synonyms and the registry of the numerous specimens in proper order must have cost him many weeks of dreary labour. We are sure, however, that he will allow us to state our candid opinion that the generic divisions employed are far too many, and that the numerous changes introduced into nomenclature might have been in many cases avoided.

As regards the first point: genera, as we all know, do not exist in nature, and it is a mere matter of convenience how large or how small we make them. Dr. Sharpe divides his 255 species of Limicolæ into 102 genera, *i. e.* about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  species to each genus. It is a great burden to the memory to carry in one's mind so many extra names, and in our opinion it would have been a much better plan to employ about half these generic terms as subgenera, affixing them at the head of the various sections into which the genus is divided. We might thus say in ordinary parlance *Glareola isabella* and *Glareola ocularis*, stating, when there is a necessity for so doing, that the former belongs to the subgenus *Stiltia*, and the latter to the subgenus *Galactochrysea*.

As regards the changes in nomenclature proposed by Dr. Sharpe, we find on going through the 48 species of Limicolæ in the B. O. U. List we should have to alter the names of just half of them to conform to the British Museum Catalogue. We do not believe that such a course would meet with general acquiescence, and we do not think of adopting it under any circumstances. In many cases the older names taken up of late years on the alleged ground of priority are so uncertain that it is a mere matter of opinion whether they are applicable to one species or another. No change should be made in such cases as these.



25. *Southwell's Guide to the Norwich Castle Museum.*

[The Official Guide to the Norwich Castle Museum. With an Account of its Origin and Progress. By Thomas Southwell, F.Z.S. Also an Historical Account of the Castle-Keep, by Rev. Wm. Hudson, M.A., and a Guide to the Collection of Pictures: with some account of the "Norwich School" of Artists, by G. C. Eaton. 8vo. London: Jarrold and Sons, 1896.]

The Norwich Castle Museum contains, as we all know, the unrivalled Gurney Collection of Raptorial Birds, and must therefore ever be of surpassing interest to all ornithologists. Mr. Southwell's 'Guide' gives us an excellent general account of them, as they are now rearranged in Norwich Castle in 55 cases. The Museum also contains a good series of local birds, to which has been united the "Lombe" Collection formed by the late Edward Lombe of Melton, near Norwich. The gem of this collection is an example of the Great Auk. Besides this, there are specimens of Savi's Warbler, the Red-footed Falcon, the Caspian Plover, and many other rarities obtained within the county of Norfolk.

26. *Stirling and Zietz on Genyornis newtoni.*

[Preliminary Notes on *Genyornis newtoni*, a new Genus and Species of Fossil Struthious Bird, found at Lake Callabonna, South Australia. By E. C. Stirling, M.D., F.R.S., and A. H. C. Zietz, F.L.S. Trans. R. Soc. of S. Australia, vol. xx. p. 171 (1896).]

A recently issued part of the 'Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia' (vol. xx. pt. i.) gives us a preliminary account of the new fossil Struthious bird of Lake Callabonna, *Genyornis newtoni*, of the discovery of which we have already spoken more than once\*. It will be difficult to understand the exact position of this remarkable addition to the Class of Birds until a more detailed description of its remains, and figures of them, have been published. In the meanwhile we reprint the conclusions concerning it which the authors of the present memoir have arrived at after their preliminary studies:—

"Though, in the absence of a careful study of so important

\* See *Ibis*, 1894, pp. 328, 577, and 1896, pp. 430, 593.

a part of the organization as the head, it is perhaps premature to offer decisive opinions as to the habits of the bird or of its affinities with existing members of its group, nevertheless the following conclusions appear to be justified by the survey of its remains so far as this has been made.

“The great size of the femur and tibio-tarsus, no less than of its sternum, indicate its massive build, though there is a strange disproportion between the proportions of the upper leg-bones and the relatively slender tarso-metatarsus. Its legs combine a huge femur nearly as massive, in all but length, as that of *Dinornis maximus*, and a tibia equalling that of *Pachyornis elephantopus* with the comparatively slender metatarsus of *Dinornis novæ-hollandiæ (ingens)* and toes which are insignificant beside any of the larger Moas. The absence of prominent rough surfaces or ridges for muscular attachment leads one to assign to it a slow, sluggish habit. In height it may be confidently stated to have been from 6 feet to 6 feet 6 inches, that is, if the neck should have been of proportions similar to those of *Pachyornis elephantopus*. With the large size of the head, however, may be correlated modifications of the neck. The small flat unguis phalanges would appear to have borne flattened nails, rather than sharp and powerful claws, which could have been of little service for scratching purposes, and with this feature is associated an evident want of strength in the phalangeal joints.

“There is reason to believe that the *Diprotodon* may have been a swamp-loving animal which, tapir-like, may have haunted the shores of the lacustrine areas of Central Australia in Pliocene times, and the association of the remains of *Genyornis* with those of *Diprotodon* suggests that the bird, too, may have had its haunts, and found its food, by the same swamps as its bulky marsupial associates. The thickness of the lower jaw is scarcely commensurate with its great length and depth, and this fact, with the weakness of the toes, suggest that, like the Emeu, herbage, rather than roots, may have formed its food.

“In the course of our brief description and comparisons

it will have been seen that the resemblances to the Emeu, and to a less extent to the Cassowary, are many and considerable.

“The presence of the bony bridge is, however, a conspicuous, if not morphologically important point of difference. The Emeu, in fact, appears to be its nearest ally, though there are points of resemblance, other than in respect to bulk, to the *Dinornithidæ*, and possibly it may be found to the *Gastornithidæ*. We may, perhaps, provisionally regard it as an ancestral form of Emeu, possibly having relations to the New Zealand group.

“Of its relations to existing forms, other than those of the ratite type which have been mentioned, it is premature to speak; such facts will emerge with greater certainty and completeness on a study of the head, the restoration of which—a long and tedious task—is approaching completion, though, unfortunately, it is in a very imperfect condition. In the meantime we believe we have, in this preliminary notice, sufficiently indicated, though in a manner less complete than we could have wished, the interesting nature of the discovery at Callabonna, not only as affording additional evidence, in so much more complete a form than has hitherto existed, of the wide range in Australia of this race of great extinct birds, but also as bearing upon the phylogenetic relations of the subclass to which it belongs, as well as, possibly, on the question of the former distribution of land in the southern hemisphere.”

27. *Winge on Birds of the Danish Lighthouses, 1895.*

[Fuglene ved de danske Fyr i 1895: 13<sup>te</sup> Aarsberetning om danske Fugle. Ved Herluf Winge. Vid. Meddel. fra d. naturh. i Kbh. 1896, p. 65.]

Mr. Winge's thirteenth annual report tells us that in 1895 451 specimens of birds were received from thirty of the Danish lighthouses, and referred to 51 species. Concerning them the usual particulars are given. A clearly-drawn map shows the exact position of every lighthouse.